PART 7 FIRE MANAGEMENT ZONE CLASSIFICATION

Public lands will be managed under one of four fire management zones (FMZs) for the purposes of wildland fire and prescribed vegetation management. The descriptions of FMZs are based on Bureau of Land Management Instruction Memorandum No. 2002-034 (11/15/2001) and Clarification of Fire Management Categories and RMP-Level Decisions; and H-1601-1 - Land Use Planning Handbook (Appendix C; Part I. Subpart J. Page 9).

"A" FMZs *Areas where fire is not desired at all.*

General description: This category includes areas where mitigation and suppression is required to prevent direct threats to life or property. It includes areas where; fire never played a large role historically in the development and maintenance of the ecosystem, or because of human development fire can no longer be tolerated without significant loss, or where fire return intervals are very long.

Fire Mitigation Considerations: Emphasis should be focused on prevention, detection, and rapid suppression response and techniques that will reduce unwanted ignitions and threats to life, property, natural and cultural resources.

Fire suppression considerations: Virtually all wildland fires would be actively suppressed and no fire is prescribed except as required to combat an immediate threat to firefighter or public health and safety.

Fuel treatment considerations: Non-fire fuel treatments employed. Unit costs for prescribed fire would be too prohibitive to implement efficiently. Pile burning of mechanically removed vegetation is acceptable.

"B" FMZs *Areas where unplanned wildland fire is not desired because of current conditions*

General Description: Fire plays a natural role in the function of the ecosystem, however these are areas where an unplanned ignition could have negative effects unless/until some form of mitigation takes place. Sagebrush ecosystems, for example, can fall into this category because of encroachment of cheatgrass or a prolonged lack of fire which leads to large monotypic stands of sagebrush that won't burn as they would have historically.

Fire Mitigation Considerations: Emphasize prevention/mitigation programs that reduce unplanned ignitions and threats to life, property, natural and cultural resources.

Fire suppression/use considerations: Fire suppression is usually aggressive.

Fuel treatment considerations: Fuel hazard reduction as a major means of mitigation potential

risks and associated loss are a priority. Fire and non-fire fuels treatments are utilized to reduce the hazardous effects of unplanned wildland fire. Restorative treatments may consist of multiple non-fire treatments before the use of fire will be considered. Unit costs for prescribed fire are high and require stringent mitigation and contingencies. Try to concurrently achieve fire protection and resource benefits, when possible.

"C" FMZs *Areas where wildland fire is desired, but there are significant constraints that must be considered for its use.*

General Description: Fire is a desirable component of the ecosystem, however, ecological, social or political constraints must be considered. These constraints could include air quality, threatened and endangered species considerations (effect of fire on survival of species), or wildlife habitat considerations.

Fire Mitigation Considerations: Programs should mitigate potential threats to values before ignitions occur and reduce unwanted human ignitions.

Fire suppression/use considerations: Ecological and resource constraints along with human health and safety, etc., are utilized in determining the appropriate suppression response on a case by case basis by the incident commander and sub-unit line officer. Areas in this category would generally receive lower suppression priority in multiple wildfire situations than would areas in "A" or "B" FMZs.

Fuel treatment considerations: Fire and non-fire fuels treatments may be utilized to ensure constraints are met or to reduce any hazardous effects of unplanned wildland fire. Significant prescriptive fire activity would be expected to help attain desirable resource/ecological conditions. Prescribed fire for hazard/fuel reduction are of a lower priority than in "B" zones. Prescribed fire unit costs are low to moderate and are generally non-complex. Try to concurrently achieve fire protection and resource benefits, when possible.

"D" FMZs *Areas where wildland fire is desired, and there are few or no constraints for its use.*

General Description: Areas where unplanned and planned wildland fire may be used to achieve desired objectives such as to improve vegetation, wildlife habitat or watershed conditions.

Fire Mitigation Considerations: Implement programs that reduce unwanted human-caused ignitions, as needed.

Fire suppression/use considerations: These areas offer the greatest opportunity to take advantage of the full range of options available for managing wildland fire under the appropriate management response. Health and safety constraints will apply. Resource use considerations similar to those described for Category C may be identified if needed to achieve resource objectives. Areas in this category would be the lowest suppression priority in a multiple fire situation.

Fuel treatment considerations: There is generally less need for hazard fuel treatment in this category. Prescribed fire for fuel hazard reduction is not a priority except where there is an immediate threat to public health and safety. If treatment is necessary, both fire and non-fire treatments may be utilized, as allowed by the land use plan. Prescribed fire to obtain desired resource/ecological condition is appropriate.

Figure 7.1 - Management Zones Overview

		Wildland Fire Management			Vegetation Treatments	
		Suppression Priority	**Suppression Strategy**	**Wildland Fire Use ***	**Prescribed Fire**	**Mechanical/ Chemical/Hand Biological**
A FMZ	Fire not desired at all.	High	Aggressive suppression	No	**No**, except pile burning of mechanically removed vegetation.	**Yes**, fuel hazard reduction to mitigate risks a priority.
B FMZ	Unplanned wildland fire not desired.	High	Aggressive suppression	No	**Yes**, fuel hazard reduction to mitigate risks a priority.	**Yes**, fuel hazard reduction to mitigate risks a priority.
C FMZ	Wildland fire desired - must consider significant constraints.	Moderate	Appropriate suppression responses	No	**Yes**, fuel hazard reduction lower priority than “A or B” FMZs; used to attain desirable resource conditions.	**Yes**, fuel hazard reduction lower priority than “A or B” FMZs; used to attain desirable resource conditions.
D FMZ	Wildland fire desired - fewer constraints.	Low	Appropriate suppression responses	Yes, under prescribed conditions	**Yes**, used to attain desirable resource conditions; fuel hazard reduction is lower priority than “C” FMZs.	**Yes**, used to attain desirable resource conditions; fuel hazard reduction is lower priority than “C” FMZs.

** Wildland Fire Use (WFU) is the management of wildland fires to accomplish specific pre-stated resource management goals in predefined geographic areas.*